

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as presently amended, is respectfully requested. Claim 1-3 and 13-18 are now pending in this application, claims 4-5 having been cancelled by the present Amendment. Claims 1-3 and 13-18 have been allowed. Claims 4 and 5 stand rejected.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by **Kuribayahi et al.** (USP 6,429,387).

In view of the cancellation of claims 4 and 5, this rejection is rendered moot. Accordingly, all pending claims are now in condition for allowance.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

To the extent necessary, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension of time or any other fees that may be due with respect to the filing of this paper may be charged to the deposit account of Westerman, Hattori, Daniels &

Application No. 09/577,932
Group Art Unit: 2815

Response under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
Attorney Docket No. 000663

Adrian, LLP, Deposit Account No. 50-2866 (Atty. Docket No. 000663). Similarly, any excess fees may be credited to the above deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William M. Schertler".

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WMS/dlt